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TECHNOLOGY TASK FORCE VOTES UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE 47 RECOMMENDATIONS

BOISE – The 38-member *Students Come First* Technology Task Force today voted unanimously to approve recommendations that will help the state and local school districts successfully implement the technology components of the state's education reform laws. In total, the Task Force approved 47 recommendations.

"I am impressed with the work of the Task Force. In June, 38 individuals came together with different ideas, attitudes and opinions about education reform in Idaho. After months of study and hard work, we agreed unanimously on the best ways to move the *Students Come First* laws forward across our state," Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna said. "Through these laws and now with these recommendations, we will truly be able to provide equal education opportunities for all Idaho students and the tools and resources Idaho teachers need to raise academic achievement."

In 2011, Superintendent Luna worked with Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter and the Idaho Legislature to pass comprehensive education reform that will make every classroom a 21st Century Classroom, ensure every student has access to a highly effective teacher every year in school, and give parents immediate access to understandable information about their child's school and district.

Under Senate Bill 1184, Superintendent Luna was charged with chairing a task force to help in implementing the technology components of the *Students Come First* law. Specifically, this task force was asked to study and develop plans for the one-to-one ratio of mobile computing devices in high schools, the online credit requirement, the necessary professional development for teachers, and other topics determined by the task force chairman.

The Task Force was made up of classroom teachers, parents, principals, superintendents, school board trustees, legislators, business managers, technology directors, and representatives of the business community. Eleven positions on the task force were appointed by educational stakeholder groups as well as the Idaho Legislature and the Office of the Governor.

Here are highlights of the recommendations approved by the Task Force today:

- The state phase in the one-to-one mobile computing devices to one-third of high schools at a time, beginning in Fall 2013. High school teachers will still receive devices in Fall 2012.
- The state procure a laptop as the mobile computing device.
- If local school boards determine the device will be taken home, all schools provide parent trainings multiple times throughout the year. Attendance would be required at one training before the device is taken home.
- The state increase the amount of professional development allowed in school calendars.
- The state require Idaho's colleges of education to ensure pre-service students learn how to integrate technology in the classroom before becoming teachers.
- The State Department of Education work with local schools and districts to develop and implement an online portal where parents and students can get more information on each online course, including the provider, instructor, quality and performance metrics and parent and student customer ratings.

For more information on the work of the Technology Task Force, including a list of Task Force members, meeting minutes, and a list of recommendations, visit <http://www.studentscomefirst.org/technologytaskforce.htm>.

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